analyzing each of the obtained digital images and comparing said analyzed obtained digital images with reference digital image data representative of an optimum image, said central processing unit further creating batches of digital images from the multiple customer orders, the images in each batch having similar identification data, such that a batch of images may include images from different customer orders, said central processing unit further determining an output sequence of each of said obtained digital images to said output devices based on at least the associated identification data;

     providing a digital image product based on the obtained digital image at said digital output device; and

     combining the digital image product from the output devices with a related original order from said original orders using the associated identification data.

3. (Amended) A method of producing digital image products in a photofininshing lab, the photofinishing lab having a plurality of image obtaining devices for obtaining a plurality of digital images from multiple customer orders, a plurality of digital output devices for providing a plurality of digital image products based on the obtained digital images the method comprising the steps of:

     associating each obtained digital image with identification data;

     sending each of said obtained digital images and their associated identification data to a central processing unit, the central processing unit analyzing each of the obtained digital images and comparing said analyzed obtained digital images with reference digital image data representative of an optimum image, said central processing unit further creating batches of digital images from the multiple customer orders, the images in each batch having similar identification data, such that a batch of images may include images from different customer orders, said central processing unit further determining an output sequence of each of said obtained digital images to said output devices based on at least the associated identification data;

     providing a digital image product based on the obtained digital image at said digital output device; and

combining the digital image product from the output devices with a related original order from said original orders using the associated identification data;

wherein said identification data is product/service data indicative of a type of digital image product for the digital output image, such that the central processing unit modifies the obtained digital images in accordance with the product/service data and the output device to which the obtained digital image is to be sent.

33. (Twice amended) A computer program product comprising:

a computer readable storage medium having a computer program thereon which when loaded into a computer causes the computer to manage workflow in a photofinishing lab by performing the following steps:

associating images received at the photofinishing lab with identification data, each of the images being related to multiple customer orders;

sending each image and its associated identification data to a processing unit, the processing unit creating batches of digital images from said multiple customer orders, the images in each batch having similar identification data, such that a batch of images may include images from different customer orders, said processing unit further determining an output sequence of each of said images to output devices based on at least the associated identification data;

providing an image product based on the image at an output device of said output devices which is appropriate for the image product; and

combining the image product from the output device with a related original order from said original orders using the associated identification data;

wherein said identification data is product/service data indicative of a type of image product for the image, such that the images are modified in accordance with the product/service data and the output device to which the image is to be sent.

38. (Twice amended) A digital photofinishing arrangement comprising:

a plurality of output devices, each of said output devices being adapted to produce a different output image product;

a plurality of image obtaining devices for obtaining images from multiple customer orders, at least one of said image obtaining devices being adapted to convert non-digital images of the obtained images into a digital format so as to place all of the obtained images in a common digital format; and

a processing unit which is adapted to create a virtual batch of said obtained images for forwarding to said plurality of output devices, said virtual batch including images from different customer orders and being created based on at least a time necessary to complete the image products, so as to compile a sequence of completion of said output image products that permits efficient use of said output devices;

wherein said processing unit is further adapted to analyze each of said obtained images for image correction based on at least reference image data.

40. (Twice amended) A photofinishing method comprising the steps of:

receiving images from multiple customer orders at a photofinishing lab;

converting non-digital images of said received images into a digital format, such that all of the images received at said photofinishing lab are in a common digital format;

creating a virtual batch of said received images based on at least a time necessary to complete output image products at any of a plurality of output devices, said virtual batch comprising images from different customer orders, each of said output image products being related to an associated received image from said received images, such that a sequence of completion of the output image products that permits efficient use of the output devices is compiled; and

comparing said received images to reference image data representative of an optimum image and manipulating said received images based on said reference image data.

Please cancel claims 35-37, 39, 41 and 47-53 without prejudice or disclaimer.